



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Finance Committee Minutes 03/02/05

ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
 MINUTES OF MEETING
 7:30 PM O'NEILL ROOM COMMUNITY SAFETY BUILDING
 3/2/05

ATTENDEES:

* Indicates present

McGaffigan*	Fey*	Dunn*	O'Neill*	Mahoney
DeCoursey*	Connors*	Simmons*		
Tosti*	Foskett	Deyst*	Ronan*	
Piandes	Franclemont*	Jones*	Olsen*	
DuBois*	Howard*	Fanning*		Kneeland*

VISITORS: Town Manager Brian Sullivan, Paul Bayer

MINUTES of 2/23/05 approved. Unanimous.

ART 44 Town Celebrations: Sullivan requested same funding as this year. During discussion the FinCom deleted holiday lights which had received \$0 for several years. This item is in the DPW budget. VOTED \$12,067 distributed as this year. Unanimous.

ART 46 MISCELLANEOUS APPROPRIATIONS: Sullivan requested:

\$0 for legal defense

\$100k for unemployment insurance but suggested FinCom check w/ schools (Fanning to contact

Adelman).

\$3k for out of town travel

\$0 for revaluation

\$10k (approximate) indemnification of medical costs. Sullivan to provide exact figure by email next week.

VOTED \$113k Unanimous.

ART 49 SEWER RECONSTRUCTION: Sullivan requested \$750k to be obtained from the MBTA as 55%loan/45%grant. VOTED \$750k. Unanimous.

ART 50 WATER MAIN RECONSTRUCTION: Sullivan requested \$1m to be obtained from the MBTA as a 10yr no interest loan. VOTED \$1,000,000.

ART 52 POSITION RECLASSIFICATION: Sullivan said the Personnel Department is working on this. O'Neill to follow up.

ART 54 PEIRCE SCHOOL: Sullivan said there is an overrun of \$64k attributed to unexpected soil conditions under the old building and architect expenses to cover supervision of punch list closeout. He said the schools might contribute \$15k. He does not know if funds remain in other building accounts. Kneeland to request hearing with PTBC.

OTHER QUESTIONS: Howard asked 4 questions that came up in previous meetings.

TRANSFER REQUEST FOR FIRE CHIEF SELECTION: Sullivan explained that there are 2 procedures available under civil service rules. A written competitive exam would take about a year to yield candidates. An "assessment center" at which candidates are tested by a panel of experts using role playing. He selected the latter saying candidates consider it grueling but fair. It also yields a list of candidates in a much shorter time. Candidates (there were 6) must be from the Arlington department and be either deputy chiefs of captains. Manager must select from the top 3 on list. VOTED to approve transfer of \$9500 from Reserve Fund as requested. Unanimous.

CONCOMBUDGET: Sullivan recommends appropriating the ConCom budget under the Planning Department because the ConCom administrator is a town employee. He thinks the ConCom fee fund should be used to offset this expense. Because the fees are used to offset actual expenses he sees no conflict of interest. He agrees w/ the chair that if actual costs have increased from \$14k to more than \$20k then something is not right. He also agreed that work done for other departments could be gray billed. Tosti to investigate.

PLANNING BUDGET: Sullivan said he would like to fill the assistant director position but is concerned with budget limitations. He said that the housing director (funded from CDBG) can take on more Planning Dept work now that the Housing Corporation has a professional manager. The work load at Symmes should begin to shift to the Inspection Department. Sullivan did not comment on the Zoning Review Committee's request to hire a planner consultant.

WORKMANS COMP: Sullivan is aware of the recent increase request. He will have a recommendation next week.

OVERRIDE PLAN : Using the spread sheets prepared by his office, Sullivan walked the FinCom through a plan showing how the approach suggested by Selectman Lyons, which includes a \$6m override, would carry the town budget through 5 years. He pointed out that most of the revenue assumptions are conservative (low). He was not sure if the Symmes property tax revenue was included. Members pointed out inconsistencies between the w/ & w/o spreadsheets. Members expressed doubts about the realism of the state aid & pay limitation assumptions.

Sullivan defended the plan. Members stated that the spreadsheets are clear and that they generally support the plan. They believe that some due diligence review is desirable before a vote. VOTED to table and appoint a committee (Jones (Chair), Olsen, DeCoursey) to follow up on questions & report back within 2 weeks. Unanimous. COMMITTEE: Next meeting on Mon 3/7/05.

Peter B Howard Secretary 3/6/05

cc Selectmen, FinCom Members, Town Manager, Library File, Town Web Site